

**THE WESTMORLAND CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION  
CONSTITUTION**

**1. TITLE AND CONSTITUENT MEMBERSHIP**

- 1.1 The Westmorland Contract Bridge Association is an Association as defined in the Bye Laws of the English Bridge Union Ltd. and shall be referred to as the Association throughout the Constitution.
- 1.2 The Association is a Constituent Member of the English Bridge Union Ltd. It shall abide with its Bye Laws, Rules and Policies. Hereinafter the English Bridge Union Ltd shall be referred to as the EBU.

**2. OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 2.1 To promote Duplicate Contract Bridge in the former County of Westmorland, comprising the area of South Lakeland, and the encouragement of inter-club, inter-county and national competitions.
- 2.2 To employ the funds of the Association in the best interests of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, having regard to the fact that the Association is a non-profit making body.

**3. MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 3.1 The management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in the following Executive Committee:

The Officers

- (a) Chairman (who acts as the chairman of the Executive Committee)
- (b) Secretary
- (c) Treasurer
- (d) Competitions Secretary
- (e) Tournament Director
- (f) Publicity Officer

And Members

- (g) Up to 2 other Members

And Club Representatives

- (h) In addition affiliated clubs may nominate one elected representative each.

All Officers and Members of the Executive Committee must be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting by a simple majority of the members of the Association present at the AGM.

- 3.2 The Executive Committee shall meet from time to time as it deems fit, but not fewer than two times within a calendar year. A quorum shall consist of four members of the appointed Committee, one of whom shall be the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer (who shall chair the meeting). In the event of a tie on votes cast, the chairman of the meeting, shall have the casting vote.
- 3.3 The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt and to fill any casual vacancies.

- 3.4 The Executive Committee may from time to time appoint and disband sub-committees as may be deemed necessary, and may delegate to them such powers or duties as may be deemed to be expedient. Such sub-committees shall conduct their business as directed by the Executive Committee.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee is responsible for the control of all monies and assets of the Association. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies due to the Association, payment of all accounts and for keeping the books of account. The Treasurer shall account to the Executive Committee for all financial transactions as and when required, and prepare a report and statement of accounts duly audited, for each Annual General Meeting. The financial year of the Association shall be from 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> March in the subsequent year. Every Club which is affiliated to the Association shall pay to the Association such subscriptions, if any, as are determined by a vote at the AGM or by an EGM called for that purpose. All subscriptions shall be due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July each year.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 All members of the Association must be Player Members of the EBU.
- 4.2 A Player member of the EBU shall become a member of the Association either when their primary allegiance to the Association is recorded with the EBU or if they are a member of a Club which is affiliated to the Association.
- 4.3 Any other Player Member of the EBU may become a member of the Association by making a request for membership to the Secretary and meeting the terms and conditions in force at the time; acceptance is at the discretion of the Association.

#### **5. LIFE MEMBERS**

The Executive Committee of the Association may honour long standing members for their service to the Association by electing them to life membership of the Association. In addition a Life Member of the Association shall not be required to pay the entrance fee to any of its county competitions.

#### **6. MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

- 6.1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on or after 1st April and before 31st May of each calendar year. The AGM shall elect the Officers and Members of the Executive Committee and the auditor of the Association. The business of the AGM shall include: the approval of the Audited Accounts for the preceding year; the setting of club subscriptions, if any, for the following year; and the setting of the Association Pay to Play county component for the Membership year starting the following 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- 6.2 The venue, date and time of the AGM shall be published at least six weeks before the date of the AGM. Association members who are members of an affiliated club shall receive notification of AGMs via their clubs. All other members shall receive individual notification of AGMs.
- 6.3 A request for a Special Resolution from an Association member, which shall require a vote of the members at the AGM, must be sent in writing to the Secretary no later than three weeks before the date of the AGM. The request must be supported in writing by two other members of the Association.
- 6.4 The Secretary shall publish all Special Resolutions received for the AGM no later than two weeks before the date of the AGM.

- 6.5 A nomination for an Association member to serve on the Executive Committee must be received in writing by the Secretary three weeks before the date of the AGM. The nomination must be from a paid up member of the Association and supported by another member of the Association.
- 6.6 The Secretary shall publish all nominations to serve on the Executive Committee no later than two weeks before the AGM.
- 6.7 A request for an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) by an Association member must be sent in writing to the Secretary together with the Special Resolution(s), which shall require a vote of the members. The request must be supported in writing by at least twenty current members of the Association.
- 6.8 The EGM shall be held no earlier than 28 days and no later than 42 days after the Secretary has received the written request. The Secretary must publish the date, venue and time of the EGM at least three weeks before the date of the EGM.
- 6.9 Any vote at an AGM or an EGM, which is tied, shall be split by the casting vote of the chairman of the AGM or EGM.
- 6.10 An AGM or an EGM shall be deemed to have been published three days after written details are posted (and this shall include e- mail posting) by the Secretary to the secretaries of the Association affiliated clubs. The Secretary shall make every effort to widen the circulation using available individual member email lists and the Association website if available.
- 6.11 The quorum for an AGM and EGM shall consist of a minimum of two officers, one of whom shall be the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer (who shall chair the meeting), and ten other members which may include other officers.
- 6.12 The Secretary shall be required to arrange a further EGM, if an AGM or EGM respectively fails to reach a quorum. In both circumstances the additional EGM shall be scheduled to occur within the period of 28 days to 42 days after the aborted AGM or EGM. The Secretary shall publish the date, venue and time of the EGM at least three weeks before the date of the additional EGM.
- 6.13 If the additional EGM once again fails to reach a quorum, the Executive Committee shall be able to take any decisions necessary so that it can continue to manage the affairs of the Association.

## **7. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR**

- 7.1 Each member of the Association shall be required in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws and regulations for the time being of the EBU.
- 7.2 The Association shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 7.1. They are set out in the Schedule of the Constitution, and shall stand as part of the Constitution and be subject to the same provisions of the Constitution for its amendment.

## **8. AFFILIATED DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB**

Any Duplicate Bridge Club may affiliate to the Association and all such clubs shall be affiliated to the EBU. The Association has the right to determine at an Annual General Meeting through a simple majority of its members, the annual club affiliation fee to be charged for the twelve month period from the following 1 June.

## **9. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS**

Alterations to the Constitution shall be made only at an AGM or EGM provide at least two thirds of the members present vote in favour.

## **10. DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The Association can be dissolved at an EGM provided at least two thirds of the total members present on the date of the EGM positively vote for its dissolution. The assets of the Association on a dissolution shall be distributed as decided by the paid-up members attending the dissolution meeting.

## **11. INTERPRETATION**

On all questions of interpretation of the Constitution the decisions of the Executive Committee shall be binding until or unless upset at an AGM or EGM. The Executive Committee shall determine any point or matter that is not covered by the Constitution.

## **12. DEFINITIONS**

The terms Association, Constituent Member, Duplicate Contract Bridge and Playing Member have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.

### **Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures**

#### **1. Requirements of the Schedule**

This Schedule is referred to under clause 7.2 of the Constitution and prescribes the powers and procedures for enforcement. It will comply with and follows the EBU disciplinary procedures and any variations thereof that are made from time to time. The Association shall act through its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees for the enforcement of standards prescribed in clause 7.1 of the Constitution. The Association shall have additional powers as set out in the clauses below.

#### **2. Receipt of allegation**

Any person making a complaint against one or more members of the Association, under the terms of clause 7.1 of the Constitution must do so in writing to the Secretary or the Chairman of the Association.

#### **3. Conduct Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Association shall appoint its Conduct Committee through its powers to appoint sub committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the Association's members and to determine whether a Disciplinary Offence should be referred to the Association's Disciplinary Committee.

The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Association and no more than five. A quorum for any meeting shall be three of its members. It shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his absence the Conduct Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

#### **4. Disciplinary Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Association shall appoint the Disciplinary Committee through its powers to appoint sub committees under clause 3.4 of the Constitution. The

Disciplinary Committee shall, determine sanctions for offences admitted by the defendant, hear charges of offences and determine whether those charges are proved and if proved, to determine the sanction imposed.

The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Association and no more than five. At least three of its members must be present when it makes a decision to uphold a complaint and impose sanctions on the offending member. It shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his absence the Disciplinary Committee shall select to chair a meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

## **5. Conflicts of Interest and Independence of the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees**

Any member of either the Conduct or Disciplinary Committee who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint will be disqualified from participating in either Committee's handling of the complaint.

A member of the Association cannot be a member of both the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

## **6. The Complaints Process**

### **6.1. Notice of Meetings**

Where a written complaint is made, or a matter otherwise comes to the attention of the Conduct Committee, it shall first consider whether such complaint or matter falls within the scope of the Disciplinary Rules and whether further action is warranted. If it does the Conduct Committee secretary shall first write to the Defendant, seeking the Defendant's comments on the substance of the complaint or matter that has been raised. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within the Association and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

### **6.2. Complaint not justified**

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is not justified, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

### **6.3. Complaint justified**

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is justified, it may, in its absolute discretion, offer a verbal caution to the offending member, which if accepted, ends the matter.

If the Defendant does not accept the verbal caution, or the Conduct Committee decides a verbal caution is inappropriate, the Conduct Committee shall refer the case to a hearing by the Disciplinary Committee. The Defendant shall be notified, in writing, within two weeks of this decision and of his right to make a written submission to the Disciplinary Committee and to attend the hearing. The Defendant shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel of his choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on his behalf. The Disciplinary Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to the Defendant.

### **6.4. Disciplinary Committee's Sanctions**

If after the hearing the complaint is upheld, the Disciplinary Committee may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) Give a written reprimand to the offending member(s), or
- (b) Suspend the offending member(s) from all or some of the competitions sponsored or licensed by the Association for such period as it shall determine.

If the complaint is against a member of the Executive Committee then in addition to any other sanctions applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to suspend such member from the Association's Executive Committee and any of its sub committees for such a period that it shall determine.

Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee must be communicated to the offending member in writing within twenty one days of the hearing.

#### **6.5. Appeal**

Each member found guilty of a Disciplinary Offence by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee. Appeals must be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee within twenty one days of the written communication of the Disciplinary Committee's decision to the offending member.

#### **6.6. Referral to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee**

At any time the Disciplinary Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.

#### **7 Definitions**

The terms Disciplinary Rules and Disciplinary Offence have the meaning set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.